

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 9 are currently pending in this application. The Office Action indicated that the allowability of claim 1 is withdrawn in view of a newly discovered reference. Claim 9 has been amended to reflect the helpful suggestions of the Examiner for overcoming claim objections.

Specification

The Office Action indicated that the filing date for the parent application was erroneously set forth in the amendment filed January 10, 2005. Applicants have amended the specification accordingly as shown hereinabove.

Claim Objection

The Office Action indicated that claim 9 should be amended for the sake of clarity. Applicants have amended the claim accordingly, based on the helpful suggestions set forth in the Office Action. Consequently, Applicants contend that claim 9 is now in condition for allowance, and respectfully request that the claim objections be withdrawn.

Double Patenting

Claims 1 and 9 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 2, 14, and 15 of US Patent No. 6,627,602. Applicants will deal with this rejection after all other issues are resolved.

Comments concerning prosecution of the parent application

Applicants note that the Office Action has made of record the issue of obviousness that was raised in the prosecution of the parent application. Based on the comments in the Office Action, Applicants believe that the references cited in the parent application were overcome in view of arguments and declarations made of record during prosecution of the parent application. Consequently, in view of the statements and the declarations of record in the parent application, Applicants understand that the Examiner has not found the instant claims unpatentable in view of those references. Applicants respectfully request clarification of this issue if Applicants'

understanding is incorrect.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully contend that all conditions of patentability are met in the pending claims as amended or as originally presented. Allowance of the claims is thereby respectfully solicited.

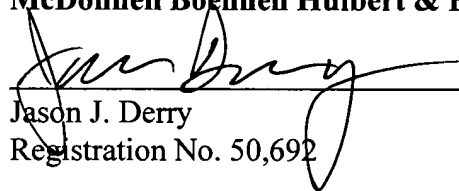
The Examiner in charge of this application is invited to contact the undersigned representative as indicated below if it is believed to be helpful.

Date: November 1, 2005

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Respectfully submitted,
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